

# ROUMANIA CAN BE HUMANE TO JEWS.

The Jews in Colomea and Other Cities  
Very Well Treated, but They Do  
Not Lack for Troubles.  
By Leo Wolfson.

In a newspaper appearing in Yassi, I read a statement by a member of the Jewish National Council of Pocutzia, which was full of praise and gratitude toward the Roumanian government, and its military commander for that region. The fact that there were Jews who expressed their thanks to Roumanian interested me keenly, and so I decided to find out the facts and circumstances.

Upon investigation I found that Pocutzia is a province of Eastern Galicia, and Colomea is the capital city; that for several months Roumania had occupied the region, and that it was being administered by Roumanian military officials. In Roumania proper little is known of the entire matter, aside from the fact that there appear from time to time in the press notices containing expressions of thanks on the part of Jews and others, toward the government for the treatment accorded them by the officials. It was evident that these declarations were a sort of propaganda for the purpose of keeping the province under Roumanian rule.

What I learned in Roumania did not satisfy me, so I decided to go on to Colomea. The Roumanian military High Command readily granted me the necessary permit, placed at my disposal an automobile and also gave me the privilege of taking along with me two Jewish journalists, one from Yassi and one from Czernowitz. Major

Plaka, who made all the arrangements for me, praised highly the Roumanian administration of Pocutzia and wanted me to go there and convince myself of the fair treatment the Jews were receiving there.

From Czernowitz I went to Colomea, accompanied by Dr. I. Weinstein, the editor of the Czernowitz Morgenblatt, and Mr. K. Ornstein, editor of the "Vaintza" of Yassi.

On entering the city, with its muddy roads and its appearance of devastation, I had a feeling of great pity for it all. We drove up to a Jewish hotel. Before a quarter of an hour had passed the hotel was besieged by persons who had come to see the "American."

More questions were hurled at me than I could possibly have answered.

"Who was I? What did I want? Whom did I represent? Who had sent me there? Was I looking for anyone? Would I take letters with me? How long was I to remain there? Had I brought anything with me? What did America think?" and so on. I attempted to reply to some of the hundreds of questions. I barely succeeded to request that Dr. Rosenhek, president of the Jewish National Council, and one or two other members, be informed that I wished to see

Concerning the Roumanian occupation and administration, I obtained the following information:

The continual warfare between the Poles and the Ukrainians had brought about a reign of anarchy and terror in the entire region. Life, property, everything was disregarded. The administration of the province was unable to keep any semblance of order,

and not infrequently it took part in pogroms. As the Roumanian troops were in Czernowitz, a part of the population appealed to General Zadig, commander in chief of the Roumanian army, to come to their aid. He was easily persuaded, and in this way Pocutzia became a Roumanian province. A Roumanian lieutenant told me that the Roumanians came there at the request of Poland, at the suggestion of the Entente—to oppose the Bolsheviks.

There are about 18,000 Jews in Colomea, and 40,000 in the entire province. They had suffered more than any other part of the population. It did not matter who succeeded in that rival warfare—the Jews were always beaten, robbed, many of them murdered.

In Slobodka, a Jewish school was demolished, three teachers murdered, three of the pupils severely wounded, and the rest murderously beaten. In the other villages in the vicinity, similar occurrences were common. It was impossible for the Jews to endure the state of affairs any longer. Who knows what might have become of them if the Roumanian army had not intervened? Strange as it may seem, the fact is that the Jews of the entire region were saved from annihilation by the Roumanians. Since the Roumanians took possession there have been no further pogroms—no more Jewish blood has been shed—and the little that remained to them has not been taken away. The most remarkable thing is that the Roumanian administration not only protects the interests of the Jews, but it also actively attempts to win their friendship. They are using every means toward this

end. At every opportunity they invite Jews, and particularly the Rabbis of the smaller villages. They treat them with marked respect and consideration. Once, General Zadig and General Petala allowed themselves to be photographed together with the Rabbi of Haradenka. Colonel Licin, upon taking over the administration of Colomea, made an address in which he declared, "The Roumanian army will protect the Jews better than any other army in the world. I ask that the Jewish representatives shall promptly inform me of any grievance they may have, and that they always keep in touch with me." The Jewish delegates told me that they had no complaint against the Roumanians—on the contrary, they had much for which to be grateful to them. They were unable to account for the friendly treatment of the Jews by the Roumanians—and did not care to give an opinion in the matter. It was enough for them that they were able to breathe a little more freely for the time being. That does not mean that their conditions are enviable. As a matter of fact, while they are officially protected, and the Poles and Ukrainians cannot—or, rather, dare not—do anything openly to harm them, the Jews are nevertheless persecuted at every step. The Poles and Ukrainians accuse the Jews of having brought the Roumanians there, and threaten to revenge themselves after the Roumanians will be gone. Who knows how much the Jews will have to suffer for the short breathing space they had during the occupation of the Roumanians?

I went out for a while to see the town. Whole rows of houses are

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